

Aviation Advisory Committee  
September 17, 2008  
Milton, Florida

The Aviation Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Carlos Diaz and members Theodore Elbert, Mike Harris, Wayne Nelms, Clay McCutchan, and Randy Roy (NAS Whiting Field representative). Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker) and Administrative Services Manager (Tammy Simmons). The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Moved approval of the minutes from the June 18, 2008 meeting; Nelms seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Diaz welcomed Wayne Nelms to the Aviation Advisory Committee. He said this is the first meeting since the passing of Marty Martin who served on this committee for many years. Diaz said Martin's sudden passing was a surprise to everyone. He said everyone knew Martin was a great person and friendly man. Diaz asked the committee to observe a moment of silence in honor of Marty Martin.

#### **Chairman Issues**

Diaz said the gate to the airport is still not operational. He said Ingram has been contacted, and they say an electric motor has been ordered for the gate. Diaz said it has been weeks since the gate has worked. He said he does not know how long it takes to get a motor. Diaz asked Simmons if she has heard from Ingram about this. Simmons said she just sent an email to the Engineering Department and was told Ingram had been contacted. She said this is the only update she has. Diaz said the next step is to go to Pensacola Electric and get a motor. He said he is combining FBO Issues with Chairman Issues because the FBO representative (Mr. Davis Glass) is still in Canada. Diaz said he is very impressed with the construction of the new hangars. He said the electric doors are very impressive. Diaz said the hangars are too short. He said his airplane is a single engine and barely fits in the hangar. There was continued discussion on the shortness of the new hangars and whether or not the hangars were built to specifications. Diaz said he felt the shortness of the new hangars is probably a safety issue and will make everyone clearly in violation of the safety guidelines. He suggested people look at the hangars before they rent them to make sure their airplane will fit. Diaz said he understands grants are still being sought to construct one more row of hangars. He said the County may consider a redesign to make this one row of hangars larger. Walker said this is the first time the shortness of the hangars has been discussed. He said a correction to the specifications can be made for the second set of hangars. McCutchan asked if the hangars that were constructed are the hangars the County purchased (as far as size). Walker said the length of the hangars needs to be verified. McCutchan said he has a problem if the hangars were not built to specification. There was discussion on moving the back wall of the hangars to compensate for their shortness. McCutchan asked if it is possible to have people with smaller airplanes moved to the smaller hangars. Simmons said the only problem is with the fees. She said the only way this will work is if the fees are reduced. Walker said he will check on the dimensions and see if there is something that can be worked out. Diaz said the FBO has increased Navy training, and this is going quite well. Diaz said the FBO has totally remodeled the fuel storage tanks. He said the fuel tanks have been repainted with special paint obtained from the fuel supplier and re-labeled. Diaz said the tanks look quite nice.

Elbert asked if there are any FAA or Homeland Security Problems with a gate that does not work. Diaz said for a general aviation airport there is no regulatory infraction to having the gate open, but it is a safety issue. Holbert said there are states that will not allow state funding to be allocated if the airport is not secured (fenced and gated completely). He said this is other states and not presently in the State of Florida. Holbert said Pensacola Regional Airport has 13 gates like the gate at Peter Prince Airport, and they have no problem keeping their gates operational. Diaz asked who is responsible for the gates at Pensacola Regional Airport. He asked if Ingram was responsible for the gates. Holbert said he does not think so.

#### **Pensacola Flight Watch, Inc. Issues**

Holbert said the first item is the gate and the need for the gate to be addressed. He asked about the Super Unicom. Diaz said it appears the problem with the Super Unicom was the city power supply to the structure was interrupted, maybe during construction of the hangars. He said when this happened the battery took over and no one knew because the battery that took over still had the structure operational. Diaz said as the battery came down the range came down. Diaz said the FBO purchased a new battery for the Super Unicom. He said he felt the Super Unicom is now restored. Holbert asked if the range has been checked. He asked if the range is back out to 7 to 10 miles. Diaz said flight instructors say it is working fine, and there is good range. He said this is an old technology. Diaz said he checked into the possibility of purchasing an Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS), and the price was \$47,000.00. He said he did not think this was a bad price because an AWOS gives out much more information than a Super Unicom. Diaz said Blaylock said there are no funds available for the purchase of this new equipment.

Holbert said the plan dimensions for the new hangars are at least 3 ft. less than the interior of the present hangars. He said people need to check the size before they rent the new hangars. Holbert said all honorary columns and plaques are in at the Discovery Park. He said all that is left to complete the Discovery Park is a wall recognizing all donors. Holbert said Santa Rosa County's donation to Discovery Park paid for all of the picnic tables, benches, and spring rider airplanes. He said the website for Discovery Park is [www.pafw.com](http://www.pafw.com), and then hit the aviation park button. He said they would like to finish the park and are still looking for more donations. Holbert said this park will help young people become interested in aviation. He said at the previous meeting there was discussion on the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), and he could not find anything that dealt with who will determine the status of the airport in the case of an emergency. Diaz said in previous emergencies the FBO has coordinated with the local FAA. Walker said the airport is a transportation and landing facility in the CEMP. He said the airport is also included in the County's critical facilities as a staging area and helicopter landing facility. Walker said this is for the Emergency Operations Center in case they have people coming into the area to work. He said the County needs to go back and identify some procedures between the FBO and the County on verifying responsibilities. Walker said staff will take care of this internally in working with the FBO. He said Emergency Management staff needs to look more closely at this area as a staging facility. Walker said staff is currently updating the CEMP. Diaz said the FBO will be happy to meet with staff on this issue. Walker said the airport is included in the CEMP as a transportation facility. He said he does not know if staff did as well as they could have done in making sure the airport is expanded and highlighted. Walker said the

airport has several good features. He said it is in close proximity to Highway 90 and the runway is obviously an impediment but can certainly be used for helicopter staging. Elbert asked when the updated CEMP plan will be completed. Walker said staff is in the process of updating the plan and felt it will be completed by July 2009. Holbert said the airport needs to be identified as previously discussed.

### **Administrative Issues**

Walker said he owes the Board an update on the CEMP and Peter Prince Field in its inclusion in the procedures. He said he is not sure if there is any more to add. Walker said as staff gets into the rewrite they may come in and brief the committee to get some input. He said the County used a consultant to write the last plan, and he felt the County will do a much better job on the rewrite; this update will be more meaningful. Walker said the County has contacted individuals on the tenant list. He said Diaz is one of the first two people to move into the new hangars. Walker said he is not sure if capacity or price is an issue with the new hangars. He said staff will work through the waiting list. Walker asked how far staff has gone down the waiting list. He said staff has gone through 60 of the current tenants. Walker said staff is trying to make sure all current tenants have an opportunity to move to the new hangars if they choose to do so. He said there are 81 people on the waiting list. Harris asked Simmons how many current tenants desire a new hangar. Simmons said only two at this point. She said there are approximately 20 tenants left on the list to contact. Simmons said after staff contacts these 20 people there will be no more to contact.

### **Other Business**

Nelms said at the last meeting the committee was promised a copy of the Master Plan. Walker said this was not in his notes. He said he will get everyone a copy of this plan. Walker said it is about time to update the Master Plan. He said the Master Plan was last updated in 2003. Walker said this 2003 copy of the Master Plan needs to be given to the other members. McCutchan commented on the FBO's "very substandard" parking lot. He said he felt it was time for a review of the parking lots, particularly around the FBO building. Diaz said the parking lot is a nightmare for the FBO because it is not paved. He said he has talked to Blaylock about this problem. Blaylock said there are no funds to pave the parking lot. McCutchan said he drove into the FBO today, and this is when he noticed the parking lot. He said the parking lot needs to be put on some type of list to be funded. Walker said he will get some estimates on paving the parking lot and see what type of funding is available.

McCutchan asked about security lighting at the new hangars. Simmons said power has not been dropped to the hangars yet. She said the request was put in to Gulf Power today. Simmons said security lights are attached to the hangar rows. McCutchan said he felt this will be a concern in the future. He said three commercial hangars are still empty. McCutchan asked if staff has considered allowing multiple renters in one hangar to generate income. Simmons said there was discussion on this topic in the past. Diaz said it was discussed but decided this concept is not feasible. He said three tenants can be placed in one commercial hangar comfortably. McCutchan asked if there is something that can be done with the commercial hangars to generate income. Harris asked if there are liability issues if one airplane damages another airplane. Walker said staff took this to the County Attorney and this idea was not favorable. He said staff also took this idea to the Board. Walker said he did not feel staff had done their work on this idea, and there was not much resolution. He said staff will give this some thought and get back with the committee. Diaz suggested dropping the price on the hangars to something more realistic. McCutchan asked staff to consider loaning the hangar at no cost to the Sheriff's Department or search & rescue organizations that need shelter for their equipment. He said it bothers him when this type of facility is sitting vacant and not being used. Diaz said the FBO parks their fleet in the commercial hangars during hurricanes. McCutchan asked if the FBO pays the County for use of the hangar. Diaz said yes. McCutchan said he felt the hangars need to be used. Diaz said he felt the fees for the hangars are set too high. Walker said he will go back and study these issues. McCutchan asked Walker to go back and check the feasibility of allowing three airplanes allowed within one commercial hangar. He said there should be some way to allow this from a liability standpoint. Simmons said she has some proposals on her desk that have not been addressed. She said when the Aviation Advisory Committee discussed this issue in the past there were more proposals than spaces. Simmons said this is when there was a discussion on putting a proposal together and offering it to the community in a proposal form. She said these proposals ranged anywhere from \$200.00 per month to \$600.00 per month per hangar. Diaz said he would like to see commercial airplanes in the commercial hangars. He said he does not want to see the hangars used for storage. Diaz said he felt the fees are set too high for an airport with a 3,700 ft. runway. He said the County needs to realize they will fill the hangars up when the price comes down a little bit. Walker said he hears what is being said. He said staff will research this issue.

McCutchan said he wants staff to research the County possibly allowing 3 airplanes in the commercial hangar. He said there has to be some way to sort through the liability issue. McCutchan suggested a town hall meeting at the airport on a Saturday. He said this will allow issues at the airport to be addressed. Diaz said the FBO is ready at any time. McCutchan said the plan is to have the meeting in one of the commercial hangars. He said he will throw in \$50.00 to purchase hot dogs. Walker said the committee can schedule the October meeting as a town hall meeting at the airport. He said the scheduled meeting time is a Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. McCutchan said he felt Saturday's are better. Diaz said he definitely felt the weekend is a better time to hold this type of meeting. He said he may not be in town for the next meeting. Walker said this town hall meeting needs to be held in the October or November time frame due to the weather.

Diaz asked if the committee can meet on October 18, 2008 at 12:00 p.m. Walker said staff supports this date. McCutchan said board members can get together and contribute money for the cook out. He said he felt this is a good way to get feedback from the community. Walker asked about an 11:00 a.m. meeting with an adjournment for lunch. McCutchan asked the meeting be held in the commercial hangar for weather reasons. Diaz suggested having the meeting in the FBO building.

McCutchan moved approval for the next Aviation Advisory Committee meeting to be held as a town hall meeting on October 18, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. with the FBO working out the issue with the facility; Harris seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Holbert asked when the new hangars rates will go into effect. Walker said he will check into this and send out an email.

Elbert said he is still troubled about the manner in which the committee went about approving increases in the hangar rates. He said he was under the impression there would be some kind of systematic approach in trying to determine the rates versus "xyz airport charges this." Elbert said he felt this is how the rates were eventually determined. He said he felt there was an arbitrary number picked by the County to determine the rates. Elbert said he suggested finding some way to place intrinsic value of the airport to the County. He said this way there would be a better gauge by which to measure what hangar rents should be, what

portion tenants should play in supporting the airport, what portion the County should play in supporting the airport, etc. Elbert asked if this can be placed on a future. Walker said Elbert mentioned this idea at a previous meeting. He said he is not sure how this idea can be implemented. Diaz said the last time this was discussed there was a feeling the money generated by the airport (which is supposed to be an enterprise function) was not covering the expense when computing the depreciation. He said the amount the hangar rents would have to be raised to cover all the costs was unreasonable. Diaz said the amount finally decided on was arbitrary in the sense it was not a calculated figure. He said the figure was reasonably small and would not impact too adversely on the hangar tenants but enough to have an increase in income from the hangar tenants. Diaz said it would be great to have actual figures and the economic impact the airport has on Santa Rosa County. He said there are consultants that come in and do this type of study, and these studies are not very cheap. Walker said intrinsic value is very hard to determine. He said he knows it can be done but does not know where the County will get the money to do the study. Elbert said Destin's airport has a terrific economic impact. He said some inquiry can be made to Destin. Walker said Rick Harper with UWF can be questioned.

Walker asked committee members to email him on ideas with this regard.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting adjourned.